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ADDRESS

DELIVERED BEFORE THE

STUDENTS OF AMHERST COLLEGE,

AND THE

CITIZENS OF THE TOWN,

IN THE FIRST CHURCH IN AMHERST, NOV. 17, 1852.

BY

REV. JOSEPH HAVEN, A. M.

PROFESSOR OF INTELLECTUAL AND MORAL PHILOSOPHY IN AMHERST COLLEGE.

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AMHERST COLLEGE, Nov. 18, 1852.

PROFESSOR JOSEPH HAVEN:

SIR:—At the request of the Students, and Citizens of Amherst, the undersigned present to you their thanks, for your able, eloquent and impartial Eulogy, on the Life and Character of Daniel Webster, delivered before them, in the Village Church, on Wednesday Evening, the 17th instant, and request a copy of the same for publication.

Yours, Respectfully,

JOSHUA N. MARSHALL, WILLIAM H. ANDREWS, JOHN M. GREENE, REUBEN M. BENJAMIN, HENRY V. EMMONS, EDWARD M. PEASE, RUFUS CHOATE, JR., JAMES M. ELLIS.	}	Committee.
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AMHERST COLLEGE, Nov. 19, 1852.

GENTLEMEN:—

I am much indebted to the Students and Citizens of Amherst, for the very kind manner in which they received my address on the 17th instant, and to yourselves for the flattering terms in which you express their desire for its publication. Prepared as it was on brief notice, and amid the daily routine of College duties, I should be quite unwilling to submit it to the public eye, did not a due regard for the wishes of those who make the request prevail over other motives.

I am, Respectfully,

Your obedient servant,

JOSEPH HAVEN.

To J. N. MARSHALL, W. H. ANDREWS, AND OTHERS.

LIFE AND CHARACTER OF DANIEL WEBSTER.

GREAT men are a nation's choicest treasure. They are its strength, its honor and its crown. Who shall rightly estimate the value of one truly great man, to any nation? Other treasures may be taken from it by violence, or the hand of time; they may be lost by treachery or neglect; they may become worthless by change of circumstances and causes unforeseen or unavoidable. Its palaces and works of art, its monuments of historic fame, its viens of silver and gold, its rich lands, its industrial arts, its navy, its commerce—all, all may be diminished and brought low. But its great names, its great lives, its great intellects, these are imperishable. No change of seasons, or of revolving years, can diminish their value, or obscure their brightness. Death may extinguish the fire of the eye, and seal up the eloquent lips; but the name, the greatness, the glory, the immortal influence, live on—the nation's rich and indestructable inheritance.

Greece was rich in her climate and her fruitful soil; great in her arts and arms; but greater, richer far, in her great men. They remain. Her arts and her arms, her commerce and her industry, have passed away. Her Pericles and her Solon, her Plato and her Socrates, live on forever.

The time may come, when one shall enquire in vain for the site of the temple of Jupiter or the Parthenon, but no time shall efface from human records, and the human memory, the wisdom of Aristotle, the eloquence of Demosthenes, the renown of Themistocles. The time may come, when the antiquarian of the future shall wander over the site of our present cities, and wonder what ruins those may be; the time shall never come, that shall be ignorant of our WASHINGTON, and our WEBSTER.

It is in thoughts like these, that we find at once a solace for our grief, and yet a justification of it. A solace,—for we feel that the

past is secure ; that a rich legacy is ours, and will be, to all time,—ours and our childrens,—safely and forever ours—the great name of DANIEL WEBSTER ; that no disaster, no revolution, no calamity, can rob us of this greatness, this honor ; it is *ours*.

“ Far, like the comet’s way through infinite space,
Stretches the long untravelled path of light,
Into the depths of ages.”

And yet there is reason in our grief. When such a man departs, when the bright light that like a majestic pillar of fire has moved before us, guiding this nation safely and steadily for forty years, is removed, and takes its place thenceforth among the fixed stars in the clear firmament, then it is meet that the nation should recognize its loss—should stay awhile the haste of its onward march—should pause for a little in its busy and ceaseless avocations—should put on its mourning colors and humble itself before heaven—should look up and reverently thank the God of our fathers who graciously vouchsafed us such a guide—should recall his words, and repeat his name and his deeds, and make mention of his virtues and his noble fame, and transmit his memory to the coming ages. Who shall estimate the worth of such a man to this nation? nay, to the *world*—for I will take no such narrow view as to suppose that we alone suffer loss when such a life is extinguished. What significance, what truth, in those words uttered by some one in the crowd that gathered to take the last look of the departed statesman. “The world will feel lonesome without thee.”

Hence the universal grief—the mourning such, so deep, so general, as never has been witnessed in this land since Washington departed. When it was announced that Daniel Webster was nigh unto death, you saw in every face the impress, not to be mistaken, of deep and earnest sorrow. Men walked the streets silently, as if afraid to break the stillness of that far off chamber at Marshfield, where a great soul was passing solemnly away from the earth. They gathered in sad groups in the places of business, and at the corners of the streets, and everywhere there was but one inquiry. When at last the sad tidings came—too true, too certain—that he was dead,—with what a universal thrill of sorrow was the announcement received, as it sped swiftly from Maine to Florida. It is meet that we should mourn, that the nation should deeply feel its loss, that anthem and eulogy

should commemorate his greatness, and speak his praise. It is meet that as citizens and students, we should join in this. We cannot forget that he whom we mourn was himself a student—himself like many of you whom I now address, the son of parents not blessed with much worldly substance, and compelled therefore like many of us, to struggle on through College at the hardest. That early discipline and training he never forgot, never ceased to feel a lively interest in, and sympathy with, the College student. Have we not a right then not only as citizens, but as students, to mingle our poor tribute of respect, on this occasion, with the general tribute and the general grief.

You have invited me to express your common feelings at this hour. I would that some one abler and worthier than I, were to do this—and such there are in this presence. Yet who can do justice to a theme like this? Who shall speak adequately of such an intellect and such a life as Daniel Webster's? Who shall gauge that mighty mind, and give you its dimensions and its greatness? The more I study the life and character of that man, the more I feel the comparative littleness and insignificance of other and ordinary men—the more I dwell upon his words, the more I feel the poverty of my own. There is but one who could have done justice to the occasion, and that is the man whose loss we mourn. And then what can I say that has not already been better said? Shall I sketch the life of Mr. Webster? Not an event, not an incident pertaining to his history, but has been spread before the public by every press in the land, till from Boston to San-Francisco and the Crescent city, its details are familiar as household words. Shall I draw his character? It is seen and read of all men. Shall I portray him as an orator? Which of all his eloquent discourses is not familiar to you all? As a statesman, you know what were his principles, what his aims, what his achievements. Shall I speak of his closing hours? Not a circumstance relating to them, but has been read in every hamlet, and wept over by every fire side in the land. In what channel then shall I direct your thoughts to-night? I can only cast myself upon your indulgence, while I briefly sketch—not as a new thing, but as something which the occasion requires us to reconsider, and as something worthy to be often repeated, the *leading outlines of the life and character* of the illustrious statesman. As respects the former, time will allow me to touch

only upon a few points, and those chiefly connected with his early life.

PARENTAGE, BIRTH-PLACE, AND EARLY LIFE, OF MR. WEBSTER.

In the first half of the last century, when the American colonies were yet struggling, along their northern frontier, with the unsubdued wilderness and a savage foe, a few hardy adventurers went forth to subdue those unbroken forests and those wilder and more formidable foes, and boldly advancing to the very borders of civilization, erected their rude dwellings, and kindled their hearth fires, where as yet all was solitude and danger.

They were a bold and stalwart race of men, inured to hardship and toil, not unacquainted with danger. Their life was a perpetual struggle, and both mind and body received the impress of surrounding circumstances. One of the boldest and hardiest of those border men was Col. Ebenezer Webster—a man of striking and altogether prepossessing appearance,—tall, erect, stately, of fine feature and limb, of military bearing, active in mind and body,—one of that band of rangers, whose exploits along the Lake George and the northern frontier are still memorable, who shunned no danger, and feared no foe. Of that corps were also Stark and Putnam, who with Webster, survived the dangers of that too hazardous warfare, and bore an honorable part afterward in the revolutionary struggle. Col. Webster is said by those who knew him, to have been in personal appearance, one of the finest officers ever seen on the field. His form was manly and noble, his carriage bold, his voice full and clear, making itself heard along the entire line, like the notes of a clarion. His corps was foremost in the battles, at the reduction of Ticonderoga and Crown Point, and the capture of Quebec.

At the close of the French and Indian war, Col. Webster, with a number of others, chiefly soldiers, obtained the grant of a township, in a valuable tract of country, ceded by the treaty of Aix La Chapelle to the British dominions. Concord was at that time the frontier post, and the new township of Salisbury lay fifteen miles beyond, where the Pemigewasset, flowing from the white hills, and the Winnipiseogee, from the beautiful lake of that name, unite to form the noble Merrimac. Thither, through the unbroken forest, he cut himself a road, and there in 1763, erected his rude log cabin, with no civ-

ilized neighbor on the north between him and Montreal. From that cabin, the smoke, says Daniel Webster, ascended nearer the north star, than that of any of his Majesty's New England subjects. Mr. Webster, in one of his speeches, thus alludes to his birth-place. "It did not happen to me to be born in a log cabin; but my elder brothers and sisters were born in a log cabin, raised amid the snow drifts of New Hampshire, at a period so early, that when the smoke first rose from its rude chimney and curled over the frozen hills, there was no similar evidence of a white man's habitation, between it and the settlements on the rivers of Canada. Its remains still exist. I make to it an annual visit. I carry my children to it to teach them the hardships endured by the generations which have gone before them. I love to dwell on the tender recollections, the kindred ties, the early affections, and the touching narratives and incidents which mingle with all I know of this primitive family abode. I weep to think that none of those who inhabited it, are now among the living; and if ever I am ashamed of it, or if I ever fail in affectionate veneration for HIM who reared and defended it against savage violence and destruction, cherished all the domestic virtues beneath its roof, and through the fire and blood of seven years revolutionary war, shrunk from no danger, no toil, no sacrifice, to serve his country, and to raise his children to a condition better than his own, may my name and the name of my posterity be blotted forever from the memory of mankind."

In process of time, the log cabin was exchanged for a neat, small, one-story, frame-house, and in this Daniel Webster was born, Jan. 18, 1782. This too has since disappeared, but the well that was near it, and the elm that was planted by it, still remain. The waters of the one are as cool and clear, and the shade of the other, as wide and refreshing, as when the forms that are now departed, in the years far off, drank from that iron-bound bucket, and reposed beneath those spreading branches. For more than sixty years, Mr. Webster has annually visited this spot of his nativity, and drank of those waters, and sat beneath that spreading elm.

The scenery of that portion of New England is well fitted to nurture, and call forth the slumbering elements of greatness in the soul. It is wild and romantic. The bleak harsh stern hills, says the historian, "among which his cradle hung high in the air, like the eyrie of

an eagle, are all untamed, untamable. But in their sadness and deep but not voiceless solemnity, they are suggestive of lovely musings, and thoughts original and lofty as themselves. They feed the hungry mind with images noble, elevated, and partaking of their own immortality. The laboring clouds in their vague career, often rested on the summits of these hills, covering them over as with a garment, so that they presented at times to the belated traveler of the valleys, the appearance of turbaned giants. Their scarred faces attested the violence of the tempests that raged around them, and beat upon them. In winter, which lasted half the year, snows of a prodigious and dangerous depth, covered the ground, obliterating every landmark, and giving to all nature, an aspect of desolate sublimity." Circumstances like these, we may well suppose, awakened the youthful imagination of a mind formed by nature to appreciate and sympathize with the truly grand and sublime in the external world, and imparted to that mind both an early maturity, and a loftiness of thought, not otherwise perhaps attained.

The mother of Daniel Webster, Abigail Eastman, of Salisbury, the second wife of Col. Webster, was a woman of strong mind, and to her it is said, not less than to his father, is the son indebted for some of his most striking traits of character. She was a woman of high spirit, proud of her sons, and ambitious of their future distinction.

The child is father of the man, says the philosophic bard. If in the present case the man was through life fond of those manly recreations and field sports which develop the physical energies, so was his father the child. The hill is still pointed out whither, as regularly as the winter days come round, the boy, scarcely higher than the snows through which he stoutly trod, wended his way in the severest rigors of a New Hampshire winter, to enjoy the sport so dear to every child's heart, "when the swift sled goes coasting down the hill." And when the snows were gone, there were the brooks, and no nook or turn, or deep hole where a trout might hide, in all their winding course, for miles around, was unknown to that boy.

His love of books was not second, even at this early period, to that of the field sports. His father was a good reader, and from him the boy caught the inspiration of the voice, and of the melody of English verse, as of a winter evening he read aloud, in the hearing of his

family, passages from his favorite authors. The school was migratory, and often at a distance; but at a very early age Daniel was sent on foot, regardless of the storms and the snows, frequently not less than two or three miles, carrying his dinner in a basket, to enjoy advantages meagre at the best. The boy early learned that knowledge was a treasure worth procuring at any sacrifice, and what he thus acquired was worth the effort. Little more was taught in that humble school, than the simplest elements, but no sooner had he learned to read, than a new world opened before him. His father's favorite authors, and the volumes of a small circulating library, supplied him with a few books, but these were read and read again, till many of them, especially the poets, were in part or wholly committed to memory. The Spectator was one of those few works; while Pope's Essay on Man, the sublime lyrical compositions of Watts, and the yet sublimer poetry of the Bible, were not only read with delight, but the two former, together with large portions of the latter, were fully committed to memory.

ACADEMIC COURSE OF MR. WEBSTER.

The parents of Mr. Webster, though not themselves highly educated, were disposed to obtain for their children, those advantages which had not fallen to their own lot. But the "*res angustae domi*" had well nigh prevented all thought of a public education for any of their sons. There were ten children. To send one to an academy at the expense of the rest, seemed unfair. More than that they could not do, and even that with difficulty. The height of their ambition was that Daniel, the youngest but one, and the feeblest in constitution, should by a few months instruction at some academy, be qualified to teach school during the winter months;—quite a different sphere of life from what Providence had marked out for the lad. Mr. Webster in a private letter, written a few years since, to a friend, thus alludes to a conversation with his father on this subject.

"Of a hot day in July, it must have been one of the last years of Washington's administration, I was making hay with my father, just where I now see a remaining elm tree, about the middle of the afternoon. The Hon. Abiel Foster, M. C. who lived in Canterbury, six miles off, called at the house, and came into the field to see my father. When he was gone, my father called me to him, and he sat

down beneath the elm, on a hay cock. He said, 'my son, that is a worthy man—he is a member of congress—he goes to Philadelphia, and gets six dollars a day, while I toil here. It is because he had an education, which I never had. If I had his early education, I should have been in Philadelphia, in his place. I came near it, as it was. But I missed it, and now I must work here. My dear father, said I, you shall not work. Brother and I will work for you, and wear our hands out, and you shall rest. I remember to have cried,—and I cry now, at the recollection. My child, said he, it is of no importance to me; I now live but for my children. I could not give your elder brother the advantages of knowledge, but I can do something for you. *Exert* yourself—improve your opportunities—*learn—learn—*and when I am gone, you will not need to go through the hardships which I have undergone, and which have made me an old man before my time.' ”

The result was that, the following year, he was sent to Exeter Phillips Academy, then under the charge of the celebrated teacher Benjamin Abbott, LL. D. The father accompanies the boy. Carriages not being then in use in that region, the journey is performed on horseback. On a bright spring morning,—it was the 24th of May, 1796,—we obtain a glimpse of the boy clad in a new suit of domestic blue, mounted on a ladies side-saddle, (which a neighbor had occasion to send,) commencing the journey to Exeter—a three days toilsome ride,—toilsome doubtless to a boy of 14. It is the commencement not of a journey to Exeter merely, but of the fortunes of our hero. America's future statesman, perched on a side-saddle, bound for Exeter! The next day after their arrival, he goes with his father to apply for admission to the academy. The learned Dr., in all the dignity of the olden time, is seated in the great hall. Solemnly putting on his official emblem, the cocked hat, he says with all due gravity, let the young gentleman be presented for examination. The scene is thus described by one who has gathered up many incidents of no little interest, touching the early life of Mr. Webster.

“Mr. Webster, with his hat in his hand, modestly advanced and stood before him. He was in a strange place, and strangers were around him, but he was as self possessed, as on a subsequent occasion, when he rose to reply to General Hayne of South Carolina. It is his nature to be self possessed. “What is your age?” “Fourteen.”

"Take this bible my lad, and read that chapter." The chapter given him to read was the 22d chapter, Gospel according to St. Luke. The description of the conspiring of the Jews, the betrayal of Christ by Judas, the denial of Peter &c. Mr. Webster took the book and read in a clear tone, with due emphasis, as he had been taught by his father to read. He was equal to the occasion. He was able to concentrate his mind on the matter, and to control his manner. The Dr. listened with astonishment; and as the young man before him proceeded, giving full effect to every word of that beautiful narration, he seemed in a trance and never interrupted him. He read to the end. Such a trial would have been a severe test to most boys, but in that exercise, Daniel was perfectly at home. He shut up the book, and handed it to Dr. Abbott, who asked him no more questions.

"Young man," said he, "you are qualified to enter this institution." He had never before heard the chapter better read. The Dr. still lives, and is not so proud of any one act of his life, or of any one of his three thousand pupils, as of teaching that boy.

Mr. Webster remained nine months at that academy. His progress elicited the warmest admiration of his instructor, and he left the school with a good understanding of the English and Latin languages. There was one thing, however, he did not understand at that time, strange as it may seem. "I believe," says Mr. Webster, "I made tolerable progress in most branches which I attended to while in this school, but there was one thing I could not do. I could not make a declamation. I could not speak before the school. The kind and excellent Buckminster sought especially to persuade me to perform the exercise of declamation, like other boys, but I could not do it. Many a piece did I commit to memory, and write and rehearse in my own room, over and over again; yet when the day came, when the school collected to hear declamations, when my name was called, and I saw all eyes turned to my seat, I could not raise myself from it. Sometimes the instructors frowned, sometimes they smiled. Mr. Buckminster always pressed and entreated most winningly that I would venture once. But I never could command sufficient resolution; and when the occasion was over, I went home and wept bitter tears of mortification." And this is the man who became the greatest orator of his time.

After a short time spent on his return from Exeter, in teaching a

school in his native town, Mr. Webster goes to reside for a time, in the family of Rev. Dr. Wood of Boscawen, a man deeply interested in the education of youth.

It was on his way toward Mr. Woods', in the narrow and secluded road from Salisbury to Boscawen, that his father announced to him, for the first time, his intention to give him a college education. The thought it seems had never occurred to him that such a thing was possible. It was beyond the utmost dream of his ambition. "I remember," says Mr. Webster, "the very hill which we were ascending, through deep snow, in a New England sleigh, when my father made known this purpose to me. I could not speak. How could he, I thought, with so large a family, and in such narrow circumstances, think of incurring so great an expense for me. A warm glow ran all over me, and I laid my head on my father's shoulder and wept."

The business of preparation for college now commenced in earnest. Indeed it was high time that it should. Nine months only, it will be recollected, had as yet been past by Mr. Webster in an academy, and those devoted chiefly to English studies. It was now March;—in August he was to enter Dartmouth. So late as June of that season, he had not as yet opened a Greek Grammar. But untiring diligence and native energy of character, resolute earnest application, and good native talent, combining, and materially aiding each other, can accomplish wonders. Mr. Webster took his place in an advanced class, that was reviewing Cicero's Orations. He had never read a page of them. Was it the clearness and beauty of that inimitable master of eloquence—was it the inherent elegance and richness of the Latin tongue—was it the affluence of thought and diction, and the force of argument, with which those pleadings are conducted—or was it that this youth found here, at last, something congenial to the nature and bent of his own mind, and struck, at last, a path which his conscious genius recognized as its own legitimate and lawful domain?—We will not determine;—but however this may be, this lad of fourteen, took up that volume, which he had never before seen, and read it as by intuition. His mind coursed along the glowing sentences, as if they were his own words, and caught up those impetuous earnest arguments, as if they were his own thoughts. No task, he afterwards declared, was so easily accomplished. Greek was all otherwise to him. He could, in those few weeks, do little

more, of course, than master the elements, and these by no means inspired him. He never mastered that language, owing to this imperfect preparation, and ground-work in it, partly perhaps to a want of taste for the peculiarities of the language. The Latin he found congenial; and with that, and his own native, noble Saxon, he was content.

The time came for him to enter college. No youth probably ever presented himself for that dread ordeal—examination,—with a more rapid and imperfect course of preparation, or with more uncertainty, as to the result. It was well that he was self-possessed, well that he perfectly understood himself, and knew what he knew, well moreover that he had two such good friends, as Dr. Abbott, and Dr. Wood, both also friends and patrons of the college. Indeed, it was chiefly through their influence, and their high opinion of his capacity for acquisition, that he found favor in this emergency. He had set out from home, on horseback, clad once more in a new suit of blue, of domestic manufacture. On his way, he encountered a violent storm, which swept away bridges, made roads impassible, rendered his journey unusually circuitous, and gave him personally, thus early, and by anticipation of the usual experience of freshman year, a thorough drenching. When he arrived at college, he found the faculty in session, and no time to be lost. Judge of his consternation at discovering, on entering his room, that the soaking rain had started the color of his new suit, and from head to foot, beneath his clothing, he was as blue as an indigo bag. There was no time then for delay, however, on the niceties of the toilet, and so, all blue as he was, from head to foot, he presented himself for examination. With perfect self-possession and tact, he narrated his case,—what he had read, what time spent in preparation, the disadvantages under which he had labored, nor did he forget to mention the mishaps of the way. Thus you see me, said he, if not entitled to your approbation, at least, to your sympathy. He passed the ordeal however, and was admitted to college, not so much for what he knew, as for what he could know.

The imperfect preparation of young Webster retarded his progress, and was a serious obstacle through his entire course. No man was more fully sensible of his loss, in this respect, nor more sincerely regretted it in subsequent life, than Daniel Webster. In Greek and

Mathematics he never excelled. His mind had no aptitude or bias in that direction. But he was a faithful student, even of branches in which he could not excel, and in all, maintained a highly respectable rank. Other studies there were, in which he did excel. With Geography, and History, he was delighted, and made great proficiency in them. Logic commended itself to his taste, and his habit of mind. Virgil, and Cicero, he read as a pastime, and *con amore*. Natural and Moral Philosophy engaged, and deeply interested him. Of Rhetoric and English Composition, he was thoroughly master. But it was chiefly in the sciences of Logic and Mental Philosophy, that he found the kind of aliment which his strong mind demanded. When he came to this part of his course, not content with the lessons of the class, he read by himself, and with intense satisfaction, Watts on the Mind, and Locke on the Understanding. He devoured them, pondered on them, made them his own, actually committed them to memory. "When he came to these great lights," says one who knew Mr. Webster well, and to whom I am indebted for many of these facts of his earlier history,—“he began to see more clearly than ever, the nature of the mind, and proceeded to the vigorous discipline of his own powers of analysis,—so that ere the Faculty were aware of it, they had a logician in their presence, whose skill in argument, and deep penetration, baffled all their learning and experience.”

I have dwelt the more fully upon these incidents of his college life, because the impression has somewhat generally been entertained, that Mr. Webster, whatever attainments he may subsequently have made, in science and solid learning, by no means distinguished himself as a student, while in college, but was rather, one of that sufficiently numerous class of young men, whose expansive minds, scorning the narrow bounds of college routine and college study, overflow all their banks like the Nile and stretch off in every direction, in one wide and boundless inundation, over the fields of literature, belles-lettres, and things in general. As respects Mr. Webster, nothing is further from the truth. Whatever countenance such a course may derive from other examples, it can draw none whatever, from his. He was indeed a great reader,—but he was also a hard and diligent student, while in college, as well as afterwards, and whatever success attended him in after life, whatever fields of literature he cultivated, and adorned, whatever obstacles he met and overcame, whatever vic-

tories he won in the Forum and the Senate Chamber, he was indebted for it all, first and chiefly, to that habit of diligent, thorough, patient, study and preparation, which was formed early in the academic course, and never through life, on any occasion, laid aside.

The following testimony, from Professor Shurtleff, of Dartmouth College, Mr. Webster's college companion and friend, is conclusive as to this matter.

"Mr. Webster, while in college, was remarkable for his steady habits, his intense application to study, and his punctual attendance upon all the prescribed exercises. I know not that he was absent from a recitation, or from morning and evening prayers in the chapel, or from public worship on the Sabbath; and I doubt if ever a smile was seen upon his face during any religious exercise. He was always in his place, and with a decorum suited to it. He had no collision with any one, nor appeared to enter into the concerns of others, but emphatically minded his own business."

The following extract, from a speech delivered by Mr. Webster, some years since, before the students at Amherst College, sets forth clearly and forcibly the true method of intellectual culture and greatness. His example adds emphasis to his words.

"Costly apparatus and splended cabinets have no magical power to make scholars. In all circumstances, as a man is, under God, the master of his own fortune, so he is the maker of his own mind. The Creator has so constituted the human intellect, that it can only grow by its own action, and by its own action it will certainly and necessarily grow. Every man must, therefore, educate himself. His book and teacher are but *helps*; the *work* is his. A man is not educated until he has the ability to summon, in an emergency, all his mental powers in vigorous exercise to effect its proposed object. It is not the man who has seen most, or has read most, who can do this; such a one is in danger of being borne down, like a beast of burden, by an overloaded mass of other men's thoughts. Nor is it the man who can boast merely of native vigor and capacity. The greatest of all warriors that went to the seige of Troy had not the preeminence, because nature had given strength, and he carried the largest bow, but because *self discipline* had taught *how to bend it*."

Mr. Webster graduated with honor, pronouncing a discourse on that occasion, on the recent discoveries in Chemistry. He also deliv-

ered an address before one of the literary societies, on the day preceding Commencement, on the Influence of Opinion.

SUBSEQUENT CAREER, AND PUBLIC LIFE, OF MR. WEBSTER.

After graduation, Mr. Webster took charge, for a time, of the Academy at Fryeburg, a beautiful town on the Saco, in Maine. His salary was only three hundred and fifty dollars a year, the whole of which he managed to save, for the benefit of his brother, whom he was aiding in his college course. In order to do this, he employed his evenings in the irksome business of copying deeds, in the Registrars office. In addition to all this, he reviewed also his college studies in great part, during the year. The time was now come, however, for Mr. Webster to enter upon the immediate studies of his profession. Resigning his place at Fryeburg, in Sept. of the same year, 1802, he enters the law office of Mr. Thompson, in his native town—the same office in which he had formerly sat, a barefooted boy, with his Latin Grammar, to tell visitors where Mr. Thompson had gone. That office is still standing, though now disused,—a small wooden building, near the old homestead, one story high, and of antiquated appearance. Two magnificent elms throw their protecting branches over it. It is divided into two rooms, one in front for the business of the office, the other in the rear, for study and consultation,—a chimney rising in the centre, and a large old-fashioned fireplace opening into the front or business room. There the visitor sees, to this day, the same furniture, the same tables and chairs, the very book case, with the old volumes from whose pages Webster first learned the noble science of the Law,—the table with the green cover, under the window, in the little back room, where he sat and poured over Coke upon Littleton, and Espinasse Nisi Prius, in those now far off days. That little law office in Salisbury will hereafter be one of the chief places of interest, to the youth of our country, and the visitor from other lands.

After two years thus spent in the study of his profession, at Salisbury, Mr. Webster, desiring more thorough education than he was likely to acquire under his old instructor, and a wider field of observation, came to Boston, and entered the office of Mr. Gore, a lawyer of great experience and reputation. The next year, 1805, having

now completed the usual course of law education, he was admitted to the bar. About this time, to the no small joy of his father, then one of the judges of the County Court of New Hampshire, Mr. Webster received the appointment of Clerk of the Court, with a salary of \$1500 per annum—a princely offer, as money was then valued, and to one who had been struggling all his life with poverty. Few young men, under the circumstances, could have resisted the temptation. But to accept the office was to bid adieu to all future distinction, and to remain always mere Clerk of the County Court of New Hampshire. Mr. Webster was destined for something higher than that. Happily for the country, he did not accept the office—concluded to be something else in this world than Clerk of County Court in New Hampshire. It was chiefly through the influence of Mr. Gore, that he came to this decision. The chief difficulty was, however, to satisfy his father in the matter. It was now in the depth of winter. He starts in an open sleigh for New Hampshire, and, after a tedious journey of three days, reaches home at nightfall. He finds his father sitting in his easy chair before the fire, looking feebler than he had ever seen him, and of course quite unaware of what his young clerk had come to announce. Not a suspicion had ever crossed his mind that the young man might not, after all, accept the appointment. He had taken this for granted. He at once alludes to the remarkable good fortune which had placed such a prize at his disposal, and congratulates him on his prospects. Judge of his surprise, when, in reply, the young man expresses no particular disposition to avail himself of this good fortune. “You do not intend to decline this office?” “Most certainly,”—is the reply—“I mean to be myself an actor, not a register of other men’s actions.” “For a moment,” says one who had heard Mr. Webster relate the story, “Judge Webster seemed angry. He rocked his chair slightly, a flash went over his eye, softened by age, but even then black as jet, but it immediately disappeared, and his countenance regained its usual serenity. ‘Well, my son,’ said the Judge, finally, ‘your mother has always said that you would come to something or nothing, she was not sure which. I think you are now about settling that doubt for her.’ The Judge never afterward spoke to his son on the subject.” The old man lived to hear his son’s first plea in court, and died content.

After completing his legal studies and being admitted to the bar,

Mr. Webster opened an office in Boscawen. After the death of his father he removed, in 1807, to Portsmouth, where he resided for the next nine years. It was a fine field for the cultivation of his talents. No bar in the United States at that time presented an equal array of talent. There he came into competition with such men as Jeremiah Mason, Edward Livermore, George Sullivan, Samuel Dexter, and Joseph Story; and to the quickening influence of such minds, in competition with his own, Mr. Webster has always regarded himself as indebted, in no small degree, for what he himself became. In 1813, then thirty years old, he took his seat as representative of his native State in Congress,—and from that time onward his course and career are public and known of all men. I need not follow Mr. Webster into this new sphere of action. You are familiar with it all;—the excited state of the public mind at the period when Mr. Webster commenced his public life—the country then at war with Great Britain;—his first speech in Congress on the repeal of the Berlin and Milan decrees;—his speech on the repeal of the embargo—both masterly efforts, raising him at once to the front rank of debaters in the House;—his re-election to Congress in 1814;—his removal to Boston, two years after—for which Massachusetts has reason to be thankful, and reason to be proud;—his celebrated argument in the Dartmouth College case, before the Supreme Court of the United States;—his activity in the Convention of 1821 for revising the constitution of the State;—his return to Congress, in 1822, as a representative of Massachusetts;—his noble advocacy of the cause of liberty in Greece;—his re-election in 1824 by an almost unanimous vote;—his appearance in the Senate in 1826;—his grand encounter with Hayne, in January, 1830;—his contest with Calhoun and nullification in 1833;—his course with respect to the high-handed measures of the Jackson Administration, in the removal of the deposits,—and with respect to the measures of the Van Buren dynasty;—his appointment, in 1841, as Secretary of State under Harrison;—his settlement of the boundary difficulty, by the Ashburton treaty;—his retirement to private life;—his return to Congress in 1845;—his opposition to the Mexican treaty and annexation of Texas;—his celebrated speech of the 7th of March, 1849;—his able discharge of the duties of Secretary of State during the present administration;—his Hulsemann letter;—his return home with impaired health and a heavy heart, neglected and dishonored by

his ungrateful country, to set his house in order, and to die;—the scenes of those last days at Marshfield;—the conflict, calm and stern, with the last dread antagonist;—the strength borrowed from a source unseen;—the calm reliance on the gospel of Christ;—the confident hope of immortality;—those words, so full of significance, as the soul, just hovering on the wing, turned back for a moment, ere it passed on through the dark portals, and, looking out again, once more, from the eyes that were growing dark, and moving once more the eloquent lips, so soon to be forever silent, gave utterance to that sublime, that last expression, "*I still live*"—then passed away;—all this you know, nor need I repeat these things. They are public events. They are the history of this nation for the last forty years. They are part and parcel of the annals of the last half century, incorporated into the very substance and fabric of the time, as the constellation Hercules spreads itself abroad and stretches out afar along the upper firmament, seen of all eyes. No words, no poor narrative of mine, is needed to inform you of these things.

Closing here, then, our sketch—too long, perhaps, but yet imperfect—of the life of Mr. Webster, we pass on to contemplate him under those aspects in which his career more definitely presents him—as Lawyer, Statesman, Orator, Man.

MR. WEBSTER AS A LAWYER.

Beyond all question, Mr. Webster stood at the head of the American bar—and this is saying not a little. It is honor enough for one man; a higher honor than to be at the head of the army, or President of the United States. For upwards of forty years, Mr. Webster has held his high position. He has had no rival; almost no compeer. No man probably ever grasped all the details of a complicated law case with such perfect clearness and definiteness of comprehension, unraveled its intricacies with such unerring precision, and handed it over to Judge and Jury so completely unraveled, that the cloudiest intellect could hardly fail to comprehend it,—so illuminated and clothed in light, that the darkest mind could hardly fail to see through it,—so stripped of all ambiguity and doubt as to be already in fact a settled question—a decided case, awaiting only the formal assent of Judge and Jury,—no man had the power to do this so fully, so easily, so invariably, as Daniel Webster. It was not with

him the petty and altogether discreditable art of making the worse appear the better reason, of confusing the mind by distorting and perverting and confounding all things, presenting wrong issues, withholding the true and suggesting the false, and little by little leading the hearer into a labyrinth of error, from which escape is hopeless—not this, not this, was his method; not this, the secret of his power. By no such paltry and miserable artifices did he prevail. He called to his aid no subterfuge, no trick of professional cunning. His course was open, manly, and above-board. His blows were dealt in open day; their whole force lay in the well-directed aim and the terrible strength with which they were sent. An iron-headed and relentless logic, seized upon and propelled by a determined and resistless will, moved straight onward to its mark, like the old Roman battering ram. Stroke after stroke, recoiling for a moment only to come back with new momentum, back and forth it swung, as if it would never weary, and solid, indeed, must be the masonry of error that could stand before it. He prevailed not by stratagem, but by sheer strength—strength of intellect grasping the truth, as Samson grasped and bore away the gates of Gaza;—seizing facts and hurling them, as the Cyclops hurled rocks into the sea.

How came he by this power? In part, doubtless, it was the gift of nature. He was a strong man by constitution and the Creator's will. A frame like that, a brain like that, a nervous energy like that, are indications of no ordinary mental endowment. But it was not by native talent alone that he was strong, and superior to other men in argument. He was a diligent student—deeply, thoroughly read in his profession. Few lawyers equaled him, none probably surpassed him, in the extent, the variety, the thoroughness of his reading. He dug deep and laid a foundation capable of sustaining a noble and enduring superstructure. The first years of his professional life were years of unrelenting and intense application. Nor were those habits of study ever laid aside. He was a diligent student to the last.

It is owing to this thorough study and complete apprehension of his subject in all its extent and all its bearings, that his law arguments are so luminous and instructive. They unfold and bring out, with great clearness and precision, the grand principles involved in the case, and hence they have all the authority of precedents. A marked instance of this occurs in his argument in defense of Dart-

mouth College against the enactments of the State Legislature. It was a new case in jurisprudence—unknown to American law—and presenting points of no small difficulty. The Superior Court of New Hampshire had decided it adversely to the College. Chief Justice Story said, on running his eye over the case as it came before the Supreme Court of the United States, that he did not see how anything could be made out of it for the defendants. But Mr. Webster had not been speaking ten minutes before he changed his opinion, in respect to that point, at least. The nature, powers, privileges, and prerogatives of corporations and eelymosinary institutions, were fully explained; and no case of a similar nature has ever been argued since, or will be for centuries to come, without frequent reference to the principles advanced, and the questions definitively settled and put at rest, by that masterly argument.

MR. WEBSTER AS A STATESMAN.

As Statesman, how shall we sketch Mr. Webster? Whether we refer to his speeches in Congress, to his state papers, to the treaties with foreign powers which he was instrumental in negotiating, to his whole course as an advocate of the great interests which are inseparably connected with the welfare of the country, and above all, as an expositor and defender of the Constitution, in each and all these respects how does this man stand forth præminent above all the men of his time, as the great statesman of America. Not one of his speeches in Congress, not one of his great public acts, but would confer sufficient honor to immortalize any other man.

Mr. Webster came into Congress at a period of great political excitement. He came with no experience, no previous acquaintance with the proceedings of legislative and deliberative assemblies. He met, in Congress, an array of rival talent, such as is not often collected in those halls—Calhoun, Forsyth, Grundy, Gaston, Pickering, Ingersoll, King, were all members of the House at the time when Mr. Webster took his seat in it. Henry Clay was its accomplished presiding officer. Mr. Webster, though young and inexperienced in Congressional tactics, was at once recognized by the quick eye of the Speaker as no ordinary man, and was at once placed on the most important committee—that of Foreign Relations. For some weeks he sat quietly in his seat, observing all things, saying nothing. His first

speech took the House by surprise. It was modest and respectful, but earnest and bold. There was the same calm, collected manner, the same self-reliance and self-respect, the same thorough mastery of the subject, the same affluence of thought and nervousness of diction, and chaste critical propriety of speech and manner, that characterized all his later productions. The House was not prepared for this in a new member, and a young man. Grave and experienced men, whose heads were already gray with the toils of public life, were astonished to find themselves instructed in state matters by a young man making his maiden speech. It was soon apparent that he knew whereof he was affirming, and understood the subject better than them all. The House became perfectly silent, as by common consent. Members laid aside their pens and papers, and those who were distant left their seats and gathered around the speaker. Every eye was fixed on him, and when he sat down, he had already won a place, in the estimation of that entire body, as one of the first three among their men of might.

What a triumvirate was that—Clay, Calhoun, and Webster! Associated through almost the entire period of their public life,—the acknowledged leaders, first of the House and afterwards of the Senate,—rivals often for the public favor,—antagonists often,—little like each other, not altogether friendly to each other,—yet each recognizing in the others an ability worthy of his highest respect. Not often are three such minds brought into contact in the same sphere of action and the same generation of men. It was Mr. Webster's fortune, wherever he moved, to be brought into communication and competition with men of great strength;—Mason, and Sullivan, and Story, at the bar; Calhoun and Clay, in Congress. Not a little was he indebted to this competition. It brought out the man. With lesser rivals and antagonists, he would have been himself a weaker man. It needed the cry, "the Philistines are upon thee, Samson," to rouse the giant.

No one of these three was decidedly inferior to the others. Each possessed some advantages which the others had not. Of Calhoun, whatever question may rise in any mind respecting his policy, and the wisdom of his course, no one will ever call in question the ability, the preëminent intellectual force, the admirable sagacity, the metaphysical acuteness, the unequalled powers of reasoning, the pride,

and strength, and loftiness of mind. "In his tempestuous eloquence," says an elegant writer, referring to his celebrated effort in defense of State rights, "he tore to pieces the arguments of his opponents, as the hurricane rends the sails. Nothing withstood the ardor of his mind. No sophistry, however ingenious, puzzled him; no rhetorical ruse escaped his detection. He overthrew logic that seemed impregnable, and demolished the most compact theory in a breath."

As unlike this man was Henry Clay, as Kentucky is unlike South Carolina. Impetuous, ardent, chivalric, fearless, less lofty in intellect, less towering and sullen in grandeur, than Calhoun, but vastly his superior in the art of popular address, the art of finding his way to the hearts of men, and carrying them captive at his will, he threw into his oratory not more strength, not more intellect, than Calhoun,—by no means so much,—but, what Calhoun never had, and what for popular oratory avails even more than intellectual strength, a warmth and earnestness of manner—a soul, a heart, all glowing and animate with the very spirit and genius of eloquence; and his speech was irresistible. In the popular assembly, and on the floor of Congress, no man—not even our own Webster—held the whole body of his hearers more completely spell-bound and captive, or swayed them hither and thither with his breath, as the forest trees sway to and fro before the blast. As Speaker, "He governed the House," says the writer already quoted, "with more absoluteness than any Speaker that preceded or followed him. It was a power founded upon character and manners. Fearless, energetic, decided, he swayed the timid by superior will, and governed the bold through sympathy. He cultivated, what our great men too much neglect, the philosophy of manners. None knew better than he the wondrous power in seeming trifles, how much a word, a tone, a look, can accomplish; what direction give to the whole character of opinion and conduct. As an orator, he was unequalled. His voice was sonorous and musical, falling with proper cadence from the highest to the lowest tones, at times, when in narration or description, modulated, smooth, and pleasing, like sounds of running water; but when raised to animate and cheer, it was as clear and spirit-stirring as the notes of a clarion, the House all the while ringing with its melody."

Such were the men by whose side Webster, at the very first bound,

took his place as compeer and rival,—inferior neither to Calhoun in loftiness and strength, in power of analysis and argumentation, in thorough mastery and comprehension of a subject, nor yet to Clay, in the power to touch the sensibilities and take captive the hearts of men by the magic of his words.

In the Senate, Mr. Webster had other formidable competitors. Indeed, his chief antagonist, in the political struggles of the time, was not either of these. Benton was there, the great Benton,—fierce, fiery, and intractable as a volcano in full blast;—pouring forth all manner of speech—at once vituperative, personal, figurative, coarse; now couching his abuse under a grotesque simile; now hurling it unmasked, and with damnatory explosiveness, direct at the head of his foe;—this man, too, was one of Mr. Webster's assailants. And far superior to Benton, the gallant Hayne, whose name, had it no other celebrity, is immortal for the same reason that the name of *Æschines* will never die. "Hayne," says the historian, "rushed into debate like the Mameluke cavalry upon the charge. There was a gallant air about him that could not but win admiration. He never provided for retreat; he never imagined it. He had an invincible confidence in himself, which arose partly from constitutional temperament, partly from previous success. His was the Napoleonic warfare, to strike at once for the capital of the enemy, heedless of danger or cost to his own forces. His oratory was graceful and persuasive. An impassioned manner, somewhat vehement at times, but rarely, if ever, extravagant; a voice well modulated and clear; a distinct, though rapid, enunciation—these accompanying and illustrating language well selected, and periods well turned, made him a popular and effective speaker." Mr. Everett, also, speaks of him as a man "of ability far above the average, a highly accomplished debater and experienced politician."

These, and such as these, were Mr. Webster's opponents. You know how, and when,—in what manner, and with what success, he met them;—how Hayne's Mameluke lance was shivered at the first encounter, himself unhorsed and sent flying through the air, as by the stroke of no mortal arm;—and how Calhoun's proud crest came down, and that lofty fabric of state rights and nullification, that he had built so high, so massive and compact, and said to himself "this shall be eternal, and on this will I write my name," no sooner felt

the sturdy blows of that iron logic, with its steady swing, than it shook to its base, and tottered, and reeled, and fell, with a crash heard from Maine to Florida, and the builder's hopes and projects fell with it; and there it lies to this day, a heap of ruins, shivered, blackened, and immense.

One thing you cannot fail to notice in Mr. Webster's career as a statesman. He is not always putting himself forward, not always springing up to address the House, not always crying out Mr. Speaker. He is a quiet man, silent for the most part, attentive, listening, thinking, seldom speaking. But when he does speak, it is on some occasion worthy of him. It is when some important principle is to be settled, some great right to be vindicated, some great wrong to be put down, some dangerous crisis to be met. Then he comes forth, and his speech moves straight onward to the mark; he deals little in rhetorical flourishes or figures, sounds no trumpets before him, deals in plain, simple words, that the child and the peasant might understand, grasps the great principles, the important points, that are to be elucidated and settled, holds them up in clear, definite outline, and places them in a clear, strong, all-pervading light, and leaves those cases, and those principles, and those questions settled once and forever. No man need argue them again. Thus it was with the questions involved in the great conflict with Hayne, and also, subsequently, in the debate with Calhoun. No error, no sophistry, no lie, how skilfully contrived or how strong soever, when once felled by his arm, ever had life to rise again upon its feet and do battle in some other part of the field. Its career was ended—finished—done.

The striking feature, however, of Mr. Webster's course as a statesman, that which gives character to his whole public life, that which will be remembered of him and spoken of him a century hence, when all that knew him personally are gone, is unquestionably his love of, and devotion to, the Constitution of the United States. This is the ground-work of his whole political and public career, the foundation of his strength and of his fame, the very substance and texture of his greatness and his glory. His great efforts, his great speeches, have all had reference to this, and have grown out of it. No man understood that Constitution better; no man made it more thoroughly the study of his life; no man cherished for it a higher regard and vene-

ration; no man labored more earnestly to defend and maintain it in all its integrity, and hand it unimpaired to coming ages. This was his mission, his life-work, and how nobly, how greatly has he accomplished it. His love of that remarkable instrument began early in life. He was yet a mere boy, when he saw the first copy of it; it was printed on a cheap cotton handkerchief; and under that now aged elm that cast its broad shadow over the lawn at his father's door, he threw himself down that summer day on the cool grass, and with no little interest, and delight, perused for the first time the Constitution of his country, he who was to be its greatest expositor, its chief, foremost defender. The aged elm still stands; the noble Constitution stands and will stand; but the boy who read, and the man who defended it, are gone. Not gone, however, and never to be gone, the result and influence of those labors. Time shall not impair their value. It shall rather add to their worth. While the Constitution of these United States remains, its best exposition will be found in the speeches of Daniel Webster; and should the time ever come when men shall enquire for it among the things that are past, they will find its true character and history no where else so well portrayed as in those speeches.

It is not, however, on his congressional labors solely that the reputation of Mr. Webster as a statesman rests. His state papers are worthy of his pen, and such as very few men but he ever wrote. Have you forgotten that Hulsemann letter; or the terse, calm, but terribly earnest language of another document, in which he assures the British crown that American seamen, in all cases, will find their protection in the flag that waves over them? Have you forgotten with what skill, and manifest ability, he met and overcame the difficulties arising out of the North-eastern boundary; and how, as no man living but he could probably have done, he brought those difficulties, and dangerous questions, to a settlement, honorable at once to each of the great nations interested in the controversy? It was honor enough for one man and one life to have adjusted the Ashburton treaty.

There is one point in Mr. Webster's career as a statesman, which demands more special notice. I refer to the position which he saw fit to assume in relation to the Compromise measures, as indicated in his famous speech on the 7th of March, 1850.

If there be any portion of his political life which is open to serious question, as respects the wisdom of the course pursued, the justice of the principles maintained, the soundness and correctness of the views advanced, if there be any of his measures about which posterity will be divided in opinion, doubtless it is this. There are those who hesitate not to pronounce that speech the ablest, and the position therein assumed as the noblest, of his life. There are those who regard him as having, by that step, saved the Union, and averted the horrors of civil war. However it may be now regarded, when time and sober judgment have come in to modify the first impressions, certain it is that Mr. Webster, on that occasion, took the north and even his own party and personal adherents by surprise. They were not prepared for so bold a step. It was directly contrary to their prejudices as northern men, and their cherished principles as philanthropists and Christians. Men of all parties, and all professions and creeds, in politics, morals, and theology, who had regarded Mr. Webster with unbounded admiration hitherto, as the champion of freedom and of the truth, now felt that they could follow him no longer. It was not the unguided and headstrong, the fanatics and ultraists of the day. The sound, sober, thinking men of the north, the conscience and the religious sentiment of the north, the humanity and sense of justice of the north, aye, and of the west, shrank back alarmed and astonished. It is certainly not too much to say that the heart of New England was deeply grieved; and that multitudes of sober, honest, hard-working, hard-thinking men, have never, to this day, been able to reconcile that step with Mr. Webster's previous course and oft-declared sentiments of hostility to slavery. I, too, was surprised and grieved. But, looking back now from another and a more impartial stand-point, comparing more carefully the sentiments then uttered with the views previously advanced, taking into view the circumstances in which the country was then placed, and Mr. Webster's known attachment to the Constitution and the Union, there is one thing I cannot do,—and that is, to admit, for one moment, that Mr. Webster was actuated in that matter by any other than the most honorable and high-minded motives;—that he was bidding for southern votes. I will not believe it. That he did mistake, somewhat, the true state of public sentiment in the free States, I am ready to concede. That he yielded too much to southern arrogance and dictation,

is very possible. That he looked with too single an eye to that which might save the Union, and overlooked too much the eternal principles of right and justice, which are above all questions of the day, and all temporary expedients, this I must admit. But more than this I cannot and I will not say. That he deliberately betrayed the north for the sake of favor with the south,—he, the man of all others whom the north and the whole country delighted to honor; he who had spent his life in the advocacy of the noblest sentiments of humanity and the dearest rights of man; he, now an old man,—the height of reputation and honor already attained, and looking forward to the period as not far distant when he should bid final adieu to all earthly things;—that such a man should deliberately sell himself, abandon his well-earned fame, the good opinion of those with whom he had hitherto acted, his own principles, his own self-respect, his whole past life indeed,—all,—all;—that he should give up all for the miserable chance of a nomination to an office hardly worthy of him, at the best, this is too much to believe. He was a man of the truest political integrity, the truest patriotism. He loved his country. He loved the Union and the Constitution. He thought them both in danger. He thought some concession, and some valuable concession, must be made. He stopped not to enquire, what will my constituents say of me, but with a bold, an honest, and a determined heart, he took his position and kept it. It may have been a mistaken position; it was an honest one.

But great as was the ability of Mr. Webster as a statesman, and invaluable as were his public services to the country, it must be said, and, for one, I say it with shame and mortification, those services were, in one respect, at least, but ill-requited by his ungrateful country. For twenty years, the name of Daniel Webster has been prominent among those worthy to receive the nomination of the whig party for the presidency. No man had done so much to strengthen that party as he;—no man had so ably maintained its principles,—fought its battles,—upheld its very existence. Four times in convention, at so many different campaigns, was that great name presented;—four times rejected for the name of some inferior *available* candidate. Shame to the conventions, and shame to the cause, that acknowledge no higher principle than that. “Into their assembly, O my soul, come thou not; and to their honor be not thou united”!

From that disgrace, I am proud that New England stands acquitted. All honor to the men who, to the very last, upheld the dignity and self-respect of old Massachusetts, by bearing aloft, above the strife and tumult of that conflict, the man that they delighted to honor, as the only name worthy to receive the nation's choice. Honor to those men.

Do you ask why so great a man as Daniel Webster did not receive, and that by universal acclamation, the choice, I will not say of his party, but of the whole country;—why the nation so proud of him, so deeply indebted to him, did not honor, I will not say him, but itself, by placing him in the highest office within its gift? Posterity, generations yet unborn, I doubt not, will ask that question. Shall I tell you what I think the true answer is, and will be to these future generations and centuries? It is simply this. He was too great a man for so mean and paltry a gift. He was too far above the great mass of the nation, to be truly understood and appreciated by them. They did not know the full value of his services, did not fathom his greatness. Poor souls! how could they? A cocked hat, or a military plume they can understand; but not so fully the Ashburton treaty. The defense of New Orleans, and the capture of Mexico, are intelligible to the mass; not so the defense of that Constitution which is worth more than a thousand Mexicos. The metaphysical Grecian defined a man to be a biped without feathers; but the multitude cannot raise their thoughts to such a pitch of abstraction as that; to their idea of a true man the feathers are essential; and so the feathers received the nomination, and the man was sent home dishonored. Dishonored, did I say? I take back that word. If there be a man here among you all, whose narrow mind for one moment entertains such a thought, who, in his deepest heart, honors the memory of Daniel Webster the less, because he was never elected or even nominated to the presidency,—and thinks of him as inferior on that account to the mere successful,—though, after all, it seems not more available candidate,—who would have thought the higher of him had he received that nomination, that choice, forgetting that it is the man that honors the place, and not the place the man,—let such an one stand forth,—for he, of all others, is a fit person himself to receive the nomination of the next Baltimore convention.

MR. WEBSTER, AS AN ORATOR.

As an Orator, one can be at no loss what to think of Mr. Webster. Who, that has heard him, need be told that his great strength lay in the power to convince the understanding, by presenting truth, so clearly, so cogently, that the hearer could not, by any effort of will, by any voluntary blindness, resist the conclusion inevitably forced upon him. He knew, as every great orator must, how to reach the heart, and touch the secret place of tears. But he dealt not ordinarily with the emotions. His appeal was to the understanding, the reason of his hearers. He was eloquent, not so much by reason of skilful touches, and artful appeals to the sensibilities, as by reason of strong arguments. He dealt chiefly with facts. He gathered them from the four quarters of the earth, and piled them up round about him, like granite mountains. He was strong, as they were strong. He was eloquent, as they, in their collected compact solid towering grandeur, were themselves eloquent and sublime. He dealt, I say, with facts, not with rhetoric; had to do with thoughts more than with words. Yet, no man knew better than he the power of a right word to express a right thought, or how much depends often on the right choice of a word, to send home a thought, or clench an argument. His style was simple, chaste, strong rather than figurative, ornate, rhetoric. Yet, no man had better command of the Ciceronian method, whenever he chose to make use of it. This, however, he seldom did. He preferred the lofty simplicity, the stern grandeur of the Demosthenic style, and seldom left its elevation and majesty, for a descent to the more gentle and beautiful lowlands. His march was like Apollo's along the mountain tops—and as he went,

δαινῇ δὲ κλαγγὴ γένητ' ἀργυρέοιο βιοῖο.

His style, in a word, is always simple, clear, strong, majestic; a nervous energy courses along his sentences, as the electric fluid courses along the wires; they are instinct with life, like the creatures of the prophet's vision by the river Chebar. His words are drawn up like soldiers in solid phalanx, close, compact, firm, immovable, each one in the smallest space, each one looking and moving straight onward, each one bearing arms. His sentences stand self-supporting, yet mutually connected, solid, immovable, like the pillars of the giant's

causeway. It must be a strong arm that shall tear one of them away.

His manner was admirably adapted to his style and cast of thought;—simple, unaffected, earnest, majestic—conveying to the hearer, first and chiefly, the one idea of immense power. His step, as he came forward, was lion-like,—his whole bearing and carriage, majestic and kingly. He stood, and he looked every inch, a God, reminding you of Homer's description of Agamemnon reviewing the Grecian host;—

“Great as the Gods, the exalted Chief was seen,
His strength like Neptune, and like Mars, his mien,
Jove o'er his eyes celestial glories spread,
And dawning conquest played around his head.”

From his first appearance, your eye never wandered from him for a moment; you stood spell-bound, as in the presence of some superior being; you felt, before he opened his lips, that all your reasons and all your arguments were giving way—that it was all over with you—a foregone conclusion—that you had nothing to offer why sentence should not even then be pronounced; you stood hopeless and helpless—resigned yourself at discretion, to be borne along on the calm but irresistible flow of his words, whithersoever he would. This is the highest idea I can conceive of human power. It is such as God seldom gives to one man over his fellows. But to this man, Daniel, it was given. You saw it in his very form,—in that broad, full chest,—that perfectly erect figure,—that massive frame,—that kingly countenance,—that compressed lip,—that great overhanging brow,—that full, round, dark eye beneath, glowing like the fires of a blacksmith's forge in a dark night,—above all, that indescribable gloomy grandeur, such as the poet gathers around the head of angry Apollo—

“And gloomy darkness rolled around his head.”

Well might Thorwaldsen, the Danish Sculptor, as his eye fell on the bust of Webster, in Power's studio, exclaim, ‘is that the head of any man? What a brow, what an eye, what a head!’ Well might the coal heavers, as he walked along the streets of London, mistake him for a king.

But not on the strength of his style, the impressiveness of his manner, the native dignity and majesty of his form, did Mr. Webster rely for his success in oratory. No man knew better than he, that

all these were mere accessories, that all these, however available in themselves, might be dispensed with, but that one thing could not be dispensed with by any man, under any circumstances;—viz: thorough, laborious preparation. Those who knew Mr. Webster most intimately, concur in this, as the peculiarity of his speaking,—the intense study, and thorough comprehension, in all its details, of the subject on which he was to speak. One of them does not hesitate to say, that in his opinion, others might speak as well, would they but prepare themselves as thoroughly. Even his impromptu speeches were no exception to this rule. The language, the sentences, were extempore, not the thoughts, not the copious knowledge, not the affluence and elegance and simplicity of his nervous diction, not the taste that presided over the choice of every word, and the utterance of every thought, not the power of luminous cogent reasoning, not the culture and discipline of that towering intellect,—these were not extempore,—they never are;—they were the result of many years of hard, patient, unremitting toil. Mr. Webster was a student in the highest sense. He was constantly studying, observing, learning. He was always preparing to speak—therefore always prepared. The extent of his researches is quite astonishing. There was hardly a science with which he was not familiar in all its details. Not merely with law and politics, and constitutional history, and civil history, with literature, ancient and modern, with theology, with the agricultural, the manufacturing, and the æsthetic arts, was he familiar, but with the philosophy of Aristotle, and the whole range of natural science. He could converse on equal terms, with Agassiz, on the lines of distribution of plants and animals,—with Audobon on birds—with Lyell on Geology, and Liebig on Chemistry. Such was the comprehensiveness of his mind, such his untiring diligence, that everything he knew linked in with everything else he knew, and formed part of a grand and complete whole. This is, in fact, the very nature of truth—the very nature of a truth-loving and noble mind.

Another characteristic of Mr. Webster, as an orator, and one intimately connected with the last, is his perfect self-possession. Nothing ever disconcerted him, or put him off his guard. You never saw him flurried, however excited. He was as calm and collected in his very excitement and anger, as in any other mood. He held the reins however fast the coursers sped. He was as calm as a summer morn-

ing, when he rose in the crowded Senate room, to reply to Hayne. He had had such provocation as few men, under like circumstances, ever had. In set and labored speech, and with malice aforethought, a direct attack had been made upon New England, and himself personally. Abuse in no measured terms, had been heaped upon each. It was evidently a preconcerted onset on the part of the leaders of the senate, and with the express design of crushing Mr. Webster. The odds were fearful and overwhelming against him. Not only his own honor and reputation were at stake, but those of his beloved New England, deliberately assailed through her representative. When Gen. Hayne closed his speech, he had evidently left a deep impression upon the Senate, and all seemed to feel that victory was already perched upon his banner. The Senate adjourned. It was known that Mr. Webster was to reply the next day. His best friends hesitated, feared, were silent and sad. His enemies were exultant. Next morning at an early hour, the Senate Chamber was crowded to its utmost capacity,—aisles, seats, galleries, passages, antechambers, the very steps and porticos of the Capitol, were black with human forms that “hung one to another,” says the historian, “like bees in a swarm,” Mr. Webster saw and felt the greatness of the occasion. He knew what was expected of him, knew his own resources, and “awaited the time of onset,” says the same writer, “with a stern and impatient joy, like the war-horse of the scriptures who paweth in the valley and rejoiceth in his strength; who goeth on to meet the armed men—who sayeth among the trumpets, Ha! Ha! who smelleth the battle afar off, the thunder of the captains, and their shouting.” Yet, continues the same graphic writer, “he never rose on ordinary occasion, to address an ordinary audience, more self-possessed. There was no tremulousness in his voice, nor manner; nothing hurried, nothing stimulated. The calmness of superior strength was visible everywhere; in countenance, voice and bearing. A deep-seated conviction of the extraordinary character of the emergency, and of his ability to control it, seemed to pass him wholly.”

I cannot perhaps, better convey an idea of the power of Mr. Webster's oratory, than by citing from the same author, Mr. C. W. Marsh, a passage or two descriptive of the effect of the speech to which allusion has been made. Referring to the beautiful and well known exordium, Mr. March says:—

"There wanted no more to enchain the attention. There was a spontaneous, though silent, expression of eager approbation, as the Orator concluded these opening remarks. And while the clerk read the resolution, many attempted the impossibility of getting nearer the speaker. Every head was inclined close towards him, every ear turned in the direction of his voice,—and that deep, sudden, mysterious silence followed, which always attends fullness of emotion. From the sea of upturned faces before him, the Orator beheld his thoughts reflected as from a mirror."

"In one corner of the gallery was clustered a group of Massachusetts men. They had hung from the first moment, upon the words of the speaker, with feelings variously, but always warmly excited, deepening in intensity, as he proceeded. At first, while the Orator was going through his exordium, they held their breath, and hid their faces, mindful of the savage attack upon him and New England, and the fearful odds against him, her champion;—as he went deeper into his speech, they felt easier; but now, as he alluded to Massachusetts, their feelings were strained to the highest tension; and when the Orator, concluding his encomium upon the land of their birth, turned, intentionally, or otherwise, his burning eye full upon them—they shed tears like girls!"

Referring to the manner and appearance of the Orator, the same writer continues;—

"His countenance spoke no less audibly than his words. * * * As he stood swinging his right arm, like a huge tilt-hammer, up, down, his swarthy countenance lighted up with excitement, he appeared amid the smoke, the fire, the thunder of his eloquence, like a Vulcan in his armory forging thoughts for the Gods! * * * His ponderous syllables had an energy, a vehemence of meaning in them, that fascinated, while they startled. * * * There was a sense of power in his language,—of power withheld and suggestive of still greater power,—that subdued, as by a spell of mastery, the hearts of all. For power whether intellectual or physical, produces in its earnest development, a feeling closely allied to awe. It was never more felt than on this occasion. It had the entire mastery."

"The swell and roll of his voice struck upon the ears of the spell-bound audience, in deep and melodious cadence, as waves upon the shore of the far-resounding sea. The Miltonic grandeur of his words,

was the fit expression of his thought, and raised his hearers up to his theme. His voice, exerted to its utmost power, penetrated every recess, or corner of the Senate—penetrated even the ante-rooms and stairways, as he pronounced in deepest tones of pathos these words of solemn significance. “When my eyes shall be turned to behold, for the last time, &c.”

“The speech was over, but the tones of the orator, still lingered upon the ear, and the audience, unconscious of the close, retained their positions. The agitated countenance, the heaving breast, the suffused eye, attested the continued influence of the spell upon them. Hands that in the excitement of the moment had sought each other, still remained closed in an unconscious grasp. When the Vice President, hastening to dissolve the spell, angrily called to order! Order! there never was a deeper stillness, not a movement, not a gesture had been made—not a whisper uttered. Order! Silence could almost have heard itself, it was so supernaturally still. The feeling was too overpowering, to allow expression by voice or hand. It was as if one was in a trance, all motion paralyzed.”

“But the descending hammer of the chair awoke them, with a start—and with one universal, long-drawn deep breath, with which the over-charged heart seeks relief,—the crowded assembly broke up and departed.”

MR. WEBSTER AS A MAN.

Time will allow us to sketch but briefly, the personal and private character of Mr. Webster. We have viewed him as a lawyer, a statesman, an orator. It remains now, to view him as a man. Thus far in the spheres of action which we have seen him occupying, the towering intellect of the man, has attracted and absorbed our attention. But the intellect is not the whole, nor the chief part of man. It was not the whole of Mr. Webster. Great as he was in intellect, he was great in heart and soul. He had warm sympathies. It was not his great intellect, his sagacity, his wisdom, his knowledge of men and things, his eloquent speech, his rich imagination, his cultivated taste,—not these alone, that made him great, and placed him on a throne, such as no hereditary monarch of Europe occupies,—the throne of a nation’s unbounded admiration and homage. There must be more than all these, or the man is cold, solitary, and alone, in all

his greatness; admired it may be, but never loved. You know it was not so with him. What man was ever so deeply loved, almost to idolatry, so worshipped of all hearts, as was Daniel Webster, of all that knew him. Especially, how did his own New England, and his own dear State,—his and ours—our noble Massachusetts, love that man. How his own neighbors,—the honest farmers of Marshfield,—his fellow laborers in the soil, who saw him in his daily walks, and ordinary avocations, who knew him, not as a statesman and orator, but as one of themselves,—a plain man,—how did they honor, and how did they love him.

The greatness of his intellect did not weaken the force, or impair the sacredness, and strength of his domestic attachments. As a son, as a brother, as a father, as a friend, as master of a household, in each and all these relations, his life is unimpeachable, and in them all he exhibits a rare strength of affection, and fidelity of attachment. We see him weeping at the hardships and privations which his parents were obliged to undergo for the sake of their children; we see him sacredly cherishing their memory to his latest days, fond of the humble tenement of his birth; we see him toiling in the long winter evenings, in the Registrar's office, to earn the means of a brother's education; we see him opening an office in Boscawen, that he might be near his aged father; we see him in his own family, loved and honored of all, the centre of all hearts; we see him at the bed-side of his dying daughter, absorbed in grief, and seeking relief in prayer; we see him with pious care, planting with his own hands, on the lawn before his dwelling, the elms that should stand, and grow, and spread in stature and beauty, when he was gone, mementoes of his beloved Julia and Edward; we see his faithful domestics refusing for a moment to leave his bed-side when disease and death had laid relentless hands upon him; we see him with careful and affectionate forethought, assigning those faithful domestics a place near his bier, in the sad funeral procession, and selecting as his pall bearers, not the governors and counsellors of the land, who would have been proud of the honor, but his own neighbors,—the honest farmers of Marshfield;—we see him in his life-time, preparing and adorning an enclosure and a tomb, whither the departed of his family, the loved and lost, but not forgotten, should be borne, as to a quiet home, the mother and the children, and the little ones, where he and they, and those who

should come after him, might lie down together, a reunited house to "slumber while the world grows old;"—and in all these things, we see the heart of the man true to its sympathies, strong in its affection, great in the strength and permanence of its attachments.

Among other traits of Mr. Webster's personal character, his integrity stands forth. Even his opponents admit this. Of all the public men whom I have known, says Mr. Calhoun, Mr. Webster seems to me to have been actuated by the purest motives and the strictest regard to truth and honor. This is a noble tribute from an antagonist. "In all that I have ever seen or heard of Daniel Webster," says one who knew him long and intimately, (Mr. Hiram Ketchum, of N. Y.) "I have known him to be a man of the highest integrity. It always seemed to me, that whatever he did, was done with a knowledge that not only the eyes of this generation, but of all posterity, were upon him. He regarded political power as a sacred trust; and though always willing to gratify friends, he never allowed any consideration to induce him to violate that great trust. I knew him in private life, and have received many letters from him. I have met him too at the festive board. And I bear witness, that I never heard an improper thought—a profane expression come from the lips of Mr. Webster. He never, in my hearing, assailed private character. No man was ever slandered—no man was ever ill-spoken of by Daniel Webster." What high praise, what honor is this, to one whose whole life was passed in the exciting scenes of political contention and combat.

It has been frequently asserted, that Mr. Webster was negligent as to his pecuniary liabilities. That he was not careful of money, did not hoard it, nor set his heart upon it, is evident. His mind was upon other things. The all-powerful dollar was not to him, in his range of vision, the greatest good nor the chief end of man on the earth. That he defrauded his creditors of their just dues, however, is yet to be shown. His private secretary, Mr. Abbott, who has had charge of his books for the last few years, testifies explicitly that he never knew a bill presented, during that time, which was not cheerfully and promptly paid. One of the last acts of his life was to pay up all the laborers on his farm, that he might not die in debt to any man.

Mr. Webster's courtesy is not less marked than his integrity. No

one can read his speeches, and not be struck with this—the rare courtesy, and decorum of speech and manner, on all occasions, to his bitterest opponents no less than his warmest friends. He descended to no personalities, no innuendoes and side thrusts, no ribaldry, no abuse. He was always the high minded and honorable gentleman; and always treated those with whom he had to do, as gentlemen. He never insulted any man, in the whole course of his public life, never maliciously assailed any man, provoked no personal quarrels, no private feuds. He rode over the field, a knight in full armor, and conscious of irresistible strength, but threw down no challenge to the passer by,—nay, bore the most irritating provocation from others, with that calmness and undisturbed dignity, which only the truly great soul can exercise. It is the testimony of one acquainted with his public life, that in his whole congressional course, he had never once known Mr. Webster called to order, for any irregularity, or impropriety of speech or manner.

Mr. Webster has sometimes been accused of irreligion. Nothing I am confident, can be farther from the truth. It is exactly the reverse. Mr. Webster was, I am persuaded, a religious man, in the true sense of that word—was more than most men under the abiding impression of religious truth. His whole life, in public and in private, attests this. His speeches attest it. His death attests it. His pastor, who knew perfectly well his sentiments and his feelings on this subject, bears the following testimony. “I am bound to say that in the course of my life, I never met with an individual in any profession, or condition, who always spoke and always thought with such awful reverence of the power and presence of God. No irreverence, no lightness, even no too familiar allusions to God and his attributes, ever escaped his lips. The very notion of a supreme Being was with him, made up of awe and solemnity. It filled the whole of his great mind with the strongest emotions. * * * Mr. Webster’s religious sentiments and feelings were the crowning glories of his character.”

Professor Shurtleff, of Dartmouth College, referring to a conversation with Mr. Webster, about two years ago, says, “When I attempted to turn the conversation towards religion, he at once anticipated me, and laid the subject fully open between us; and I need not tell you how much I was gratified in finding that not only his

opinions in regard to the great doctrines and duties of our holy religion, but also his views of what is needful to prepare a soul for death and the coming judgment, were in sympathy with my own."

A correspondent of the New York Commercial Advertiser furnishes the following reminiscence of Mr. Webster's religious views.

"Some years ago we had the pleasure of spending several days, in company with Mr. Webster, at the residence of a mutual friend, Harvey Ely, Esq., at Rochester. During that intercourse, we had more than one opportunity of conversing on religious subjects, sometimes on doctrinal points, but more generally on the importance of the Holy Scriptures, as containing the plan of a man's salvation through the atonement of Christ. So far as our knowledge of the subject extends, Mr. Webster was as orthodox as any man we ever conversed with."

Mr. Webster's reverence for the Scriptures is well known. "On one occasion," says the correspondent just quoted, "when seated in the drawing-room with Mr. and Mrs. Ely, Mr. Webster laid his hand on a copy of the Scriptures, saying with great emphasis, '*This is the book!*' This led to a conversation on the importance of the Scriptures, and the too frequent neglect of the study of the Bible by gentlemen of the legal profession, their pursuits in life leading them to the almost exclusive study of works having reference to their profession. Mr. Webster said, 'I have read through the entire Bible many times. I now make a practice to go through it once a year. It is the book of all others for lawyers as well as divines; and I pity the man who cannot find in it a rich supply of thought and of rules for his conduct. It fits man for life, it prepares him for death.'"

How carefully he read, and how profoundly he studied and meditated upon those sacred truths,—making their thoughts, and, in many cases, their language, his own;—with what delight he returned ever to that sublime, that favorite poem, the book of Job;—with what devout care he gathered his household, especially on the sabbath, and read to them, in his own peculiarly impressive manner, with due emphasis, and due comment, the sacred Scriptures, able to make them wise unto salvation;—how, after himself too ill to join in this exercise, he still selected the portion to be read, and indicated the passages to be particularly noticed;—these things are known to

all,—and they speak the deep religious sentiment, the earnest convictions of the man. What public speaker ever bore more honorable testimony to the value of religious institutions, and religious teachers, than did Mr. Webster, in his plea in the Girard case. Nor is this a solitary instance. It is in keeping with the whole tone and spirit of his public addresses. You cannot have forgotten that sublimely eloquent passage in the tribute to Jeremiah Mason,—so expressive of the feelings of a heart deeply imbued with religious truth,—so appropriate, shall I say, to his own case, as it were a solemn dirge composed beforehand for his own burial. “But, sir, political eminence and professional fame fade away and die with all things earthly. Nothing of character is really permanent but virtue and personal worth. These remain. Whatever of excellence is wrought into the soul itself belongs to both worlds. Real goodness does not attach itself merely to this life; it points to another world. Political or professional reputation cannot last forever; but a conscience void of offense before God and man is an inheritance for eternity. Religion, therefore, is a necessary and indispensable element in any great human character. There is no living without it. Religion is the tie that connects man with his Maker, and holds him to his throne. If that tie be all sundered, all broken, he floats away a worthless atom in the universe; its proper attractions all gone, its destiny thwarted, and its whole future nothing but darkness, desolation, and death. A man with no sense of religious duty, is he whom the Scriptures describe, in such terse but terrific language, as living *‘without God in the world.’* Such a man is out of his proper being, out of the circle of all his duties, out of the circle of all his happiness, and away, far, far away, from the purposes of his creation.”

Such language as this comes not from any mind not itself deeply impressed with the truths of religion. We are not surprised to learn that Mr. Webster was in the habit of committing his thoughts on certain portions of Scripture to writing; and that it was his intention to prepare a treatise on the internal evidences of Christianity, as a personal and dying testimony to his earnest conviction of the divine reality of the gospel of Jesus Christ. Nor are we surprised at the heroic calmness with which a mind thus conversant with eternal realities, and resting on the firm foundation of all truth, staying itself upon God’s arm, and taking fast hold on those strong pillars that

bear up all our hopes, could meet the final and solemn moment of departure. "What," said he to those that gathered around him, "what would be the condition of any of us, without the hope of immortality? What is there to rest that hope upon but the gospel?" Such was Mr. Webster, as regards his private life, his personal Christian character.

Shall I allude to the solemn close of so great and eventful a life? To me, there is something peculiarly sad and touching in the circumstances of his death. After a period of forty years, devoted to the service of his country, service but ill-requited, he comes home—"An old man broken by the storms of state"—to seek, in the repose and quiet of private life, that rest which an impaired constitution demands;—to cultivate, after so many years of stormy conflict, that literary leisure which his taste demanded, and so highly fitted him to enjoy,—that *otium cum dignitate* of the Roman;—to mingle again with the honest yeomanry of Marshfield—his friends and neighbors;—to cultivate and adorn those fields which bear witness to his careful husbandry;—to hear again the deep voice of the ever-rolling sea; and, by careful communing with his own soul and his God, prepare to set sail upon that vaster and more solemn ocean that washes the shores of this our mortal life. These were his plans. They were not realized;—that vast ocean was nearer than even he had thought. Its waves were already at his very feet. He came home but to die. In the full vigor of that noble intellect, with faculties unclouded, his eye not waxing dim, nor his natural strength abated,—with some sweet and pleasant years of yet remaining life floating in vision before him, the summons came,—the shadow, feared by men, fell o'er his path,—the sands had already run out,—the hour-glass stood empty. He recognized the summons, and hastily girding his robes about him, set forth on the long journey "whence no traveler returns." His last thoughts were given to his home, his family, his friends. Nor did his love of nature and the plain farm life, associated with his earliest recollections, and in which he had so delighted from his boyhood, forsake him, even at the last. But a few days before his death, when too ill to leave his dwelling, his cattle were driven up to his door, "that he might look once more into their honest faces, and smell their breath." Faithful friends!—they had never deserted him, —they had never been unfaithful,—and he loved them for it.

I need not relate the solemn scenes of that death-chamber;—with what calmness he met the last great enemy;—with what affectionate solicitude for the sorrow-stricken family that wept around him;—with what great thoughts of the unknown future that was opening upon his vision.

“My general wish on earth has been to do my Maker’s will. I thank him. I thank him for the means of doing some little good; for these beloved objects; for the blessings that surround me; for my nature and associations; I thank him that I am to die under so many circumstances of love and affection.”

After an interval of some hours of apparent unconsciousness, from which it was supposed he would not again arouse, the deep silence of the house is broken by that voice once more heard, clear, deep, full as ever it had rung forth in the senate chamber, uttering, in his own emphatic manner, these words,—“Life—Life—Death—Death—how curious it is!” The mystery of death was passing before him. His great mind was busy with this new problem. Life—Life—Death—Death—how curious it is! “It pierced to the farthest apartment of the house, startling those who heard it like the sound of a trumpet. Shrouded from the outer world, that vast mind was struggling with the vaster theme of Life and Death. As he passed the confines of mortal existence, the mysterious problem began to unfold itself, and the dying statesman watched it with increasing interest and wonder, until that startling exclamation burst from his lips. The inappropriate use of the word ‘curious’ reveals how completely he was absorbed in the great thought. Standing where life and death met, he was so intent in the view before him, that he was unconscious what his tongue uttered.” That voice was heard no more; that great mystery was solved.

It was the hour of approaching morn when his spirit took its departure. The stars that had watched out the silent hours of that long and anxious night, were just fading into the dawn, as that great soul, released from the darkness of this lower world, and the bondage of this earthly tabernacle, also passed, like those fading stars, from our earthly vision,—passed on through the gates of the morning into the clearer light of day.

With such gathering of multitudinous thousands, with such real, unaffected grief, as seldom follows man to his sepulture, they laid him

in his tomb,—a sacred spot and a beautiful one, hallowed by Pilgrim associations, and Pilgrim dust. There he sleeps and is at rest, with kings and mighty men of the earth. The storms of life, the conflicts of the political arena, the cares of state, no more disturb his deep repose. The simple name carved over that tomb-door is his sufficient and enduring monument. The sea, moaning along its shores, chants his requiem. The great unfathomable sea mourns for him, as conscious that it has lost an equal and a brother. The great heart of the nation mourns for him, and will not let him die.

What a life was that we have been contemplating! Overlooking the growth, and identified with the history, of this great people! He saw it in his boyhood, and his youth, a narrow belt of states stretching along the Atlantic coast. He saw it in his manhood, reaching out its strong arms over the mountains and broad valleys of the west. He saw it in his old age, a giant form, mature, and strong, and stately, reposing on either ocean, and covering the breadth of a vast continent. This nation may pass away. The link that binds these noble states may be severed; our cities and our navies may perish, and all our grandeur die. But his name shall not die,—it cannot perish. “*Quid-quid ex Agricola amavimus, quid-quid mirati sumus, manet mansurum que est in animis, hominum, in eternitate temporum fama rerum.*”



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